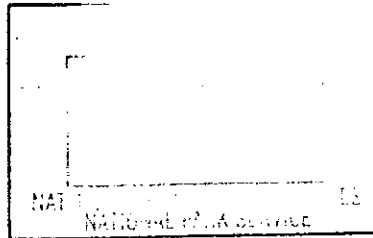


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



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This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Rock Island National Cemetery

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number Rock Island Arsenal

☐ not for publication N/A

city or town Moline

☐ vicinity N/A

state Illinois

code IL

county Rock Island

code 161

zip code 61265

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☒ nationally ☒ statewide ☐ locally ☐ (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Karen Rome 5/8/97  
Signature of certifying official/Title Historic Preservation Officer Date  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William L. Loh 4-16-97  
Signature of commenting or other official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date  
Illinois Historic Preservation Agency  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that this property is:
- ☒ entered in the National Register
    - ☐ See continuation sheet.
  - ☐ determined eligible for the National Register
    - ☐ See continuation sheet.
  - ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
  - ☐ removed from the National Register
  - ☐ other, (explain:)

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Eason H. Ball 6-13-97

Rock Island National Cemetery

Name of Property

Rock Island County, Illinois

County and State

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property (Check all that apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure
	<input type="checkbox"/> object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	1	buildings
1	0	sites
2	1	structures
13	1	objects
16	3	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

Civil War Era National Cemeteries

16

**6. Function or Use****Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Funerary: Cemetery

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Funerary: Cemetery

**7. Description****Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

No style

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick; Stone; Wood

roof Copper; Synthetics: Fiberglass

other Metal: Iron; Stone: marble, limestone

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance****Eligible National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☒ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Military

**Period of Significance**

1868-1932

**Significant Dates**

1868

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

N/A

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References****Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☒ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey  
# \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record  
# \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☒ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository

Department of Veterans Affairs

Rock Island National Cemetery  
Name of Property

Rock Island County, Illinois  
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Age of Property 44.2

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1     
Zone Easting Northing

2

3     
Zone Easting Northing

4

☒ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Therese T. Sammartino, Staff Assistant, National Cemetery System

organization Department of Veterans Affairs date May 6, 1997

street & number 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W. telephone (202) 565-4895

city or town Washington, D.C. state zip code 20420

Additional Documentation

Put the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Department of Veterans Affairs

street & number 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W. telephone

city or town Washington, D.C. state zip code 20420

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Continuation Sheet

Civil War Era National Cemeteries

Rock Island National Cemetery  
Rock Island County, Illinois

Section number 7 Page 1

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION**

The Rock Island National Cemetery is located at the extreme southeast end of the Rock Island Arsenal on the Mississippi River, in Rock Island County, Illinois. The main entrance, constructed in 1993, is located on the north side along Rodman Avenue. It has stone walls with piers twenty feet wide on each side of the drive and is constructed of the same limestone ashlar pattern as the historic arsenal buildings elsewhere on Rock Island. Iron fencing and limestone piers form one-quarter of a circle on each side of the stone walls. The flagpole is located south of the main entrance. The administration/maintenance building is situated to the west of the flagpole circle, and a committal service shelter is located between the flagpole and the cemetery entrance.

Graves were originally marked by headboards, painted and lettered, and are now marked by upright marble headstones, except for Sections O and P. In 1982, a policy decision by the Department of Veterans Affairs provided for the use of flat markers in national cemeteries. As a result, the graves in these two sections are marked with flat granite markers. This decision was later reversed by the passage of Public Law 99-576, which mandated that for all interments that occur on or after January 1, 1987, the grave markers will be upright.

As of February 28, 1997, there were 15,920 graves used for the interment of 17,498 casketed remains and 691 sites used for the interment of 1,043 cremated remains. Interments of casketed remains in occupied graves and reserved graves continue. As of February 28, 1997, there were 1,691 gravesites available (1,046 reserved) for the interment of casketed remains and 41 sites available for the interment of cremated remains. The cemetery is expected to remain open until 2008.

The first civilian superintendent of the cemetery was Raymond L. Cordell, whose appointment was dated June 14, 1970.

The cemetery grounds were originally enclosed by a light wooden picket fence that was later replaced with an iron fence. The original entry gate, as well as the iron fence surrounding the cemetery, had to be dismantled in 1972, due to their dilapidated condition. Portions of the fence are on display inside the Rock Island Arsenal Museum, and portions have been erected at several locations within the Arsenal, including around the commanding officer's residence. A cast iron eagle from the fence that originally surrounded the cemetery is on display in the administration building at the cemetery. The historic arch, which originally spanned the main entrance gate and made from melted-down Civil War weaponry, is located near Section I of the cemetery. Atop the arch is a bronze plaque inscribed as follows:

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Civil War Era National Cemeteries

Rock Island National Cemetery  
Rock Island County, Illinois

Section number 7 Page 2

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)

NATIONAL MILITARY CEMETERY  
ESTABLISHED 1863  
INTERMENTS 289  
KNOWN 280  
UNKNOWN 9

The arch leads to a walkway, along which are plaques inscribed with selected verses of Theodore O'Hara's "Bivouac of the Dead." Theodore O'Hara wrote this poem in August 1847, in memory of Kentuckians who fell at Buena Vista. There are seven plaques containing the following selected verses of this poem:

The muffled drum's sad roll has beat  
The soldier's last tattoo  
No more on life's parade shall meet  
That brave and fallen few.

On fame's eternal camping ground  
Their silent tents are spread  
And glory guards, with solemn round  
The bivouac of the dead.

No rumor of the foe's advance  
Now swells upon the wind  
No troubled thought at midnight haunts  
Of loved ones left behind

No vision of the morrow's strife  
The warrior's dream alarms  
No braying horn nor screaming fife  
At dawn shall come to arms

The neighing troop, the flashing blade  
The bugle's stirring blast  
The charge, the dreadful cannonade  
The din and shout, are past

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Continuation Sheet

Civil War Era National Cemeteries

Rock Island National Cemetery  
Rock Island County, Illinois

Section number 7 Page 3

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)

Your own proud land's heroic soil  
Shall be your fitter grave  
She claims from war his richest spoil  
The ashes of her brave

Rest on, embalmed and sainted dead  
Dear as the blood ye gave  
No impious footstep here shall tread.  
The herbage of your grave

There are two additional plaques near the end of this walkway. One is inscribed with the language of the Act to Protect and Establish National Cemeteries, and reads as follows:

AN ACT  
TO ESTABLISH AND PROTECT NATIONAL CEMETERIES  
APPROVED FEBRUARY 22, 1867  
Section 3

And be it further enacted. That any person who shall willingly destroy, mutilate, deface, injure, or remove any monument, gravestone, or other structure, or shall willfully destroy, cut, break, injure, or remove any tree, shrub, or plant within the limits of any of said National Cemeteries, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof before any District or Circuit Court of the United States within any State or District where any of said National Cemeteries are situated, shall be liable to a fine of not less than twenty-five nor more than one hundred dollars, or to imprisonment of not less than fifteen nor more than sixty days, according to the nature and aggravation of the offense. And the Superintendent in charge of any National Cemetery is hereby authorized to arrest forth with any person engaged in committing any misdemeanor herein prohibited, and to bring such person before any United States Commissioner or Judge of any District or Circuit Court of the United State, within any State or District where any of said Cemeteries are situated, for the purpose of holding said person to answer for said misdemeanor then and there make complaint in due form.

The second plaque is inscribed with General Orders No. 80 of the War Department issued by the Adjutant General's Office in Washington, September 1, 1875, by order of the Secretary of War. The orders read as follows:

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Civil War Era National Cemeteries

Rock Island National Cemetery  
Rock Island County, Illinois

Section number 7 Page 4

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)

I.

Information having been received of the desecration of soldiers' graves by picnic parties in a National Cemetery, and by vending refreshments therein, it is hereby ordered that hereafter no such practices shall be allowed in any National Cemetery, nor any adjoining ground within the control of the United States.

II.

VISITORS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED  
IN THE NATIONAL CEMETERIES  
BEFORE SUNRISE OR AFTER SUNSET  
No refreshments will be taken into these Cemeteries.

III.

IN NATIONAL CEMETERIES WHERE DRIVING IS PERMITTED.  
THE SPEED MUST BE CONFINED TO A WALK  
If it is found difficult to enforce this rule at any Cemetery the gates will be closed over  
the carriageway and all driving prohibited.

IV.

These orders will be conspicuously posted at the main entrance of each National Cemetery.  
and will be rigidly enforced by the Superintendents.

The nine plaques were all manufactured in 1880.

At the end of the walkway are located the graves of Brigadier General Thomas J. Rodman and his wife, Martha Ann, as well as those of Colonel David Matson King and his wife, Marguerite F. Both Rodman and King were commanding officers of the Rock Island Arsenal. The Rodman gravesite, designated by the secretary of war, is marked by a large obelisk monument with a wrought-iron enclosure. Two headstones in front of the monument contain the following inscriptions:



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Civil War Era National Cemeteries

Rock Island National Cemetery  
Rock Island County, Illinois

Section number 7 Page 5

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)

THOMAS JACKSON RODMAN  
1816-1871

MARTHA ANN RODMAN  
1823-1908

General Rodman was a distinguished Civil War officer and was commanding officer of the arsenal from 1865 until his death in 1871. He has been called "the father of Rock Island Arsenal, as the arsenal was planned under his supervision. The three Civil War-era cannon surrounding General Rodman's grave are especially significant, as they were cast by a process invented by General Rodman. Iron cannon fabricated by this method were cast around a water- or air-cooled core so that the barrel cooled first and was compressed by contraction of the outside metal. Crystallization of the metal was regulated thereby so that guns made in this manner would withstand considerable internal pressure without breaking. The result was a stronger, safer cannon that was more reliable and longer lasting than other guns of the era. The life of a gun was increased eleven to twenty times when cast by the Rodman process. General Rodman also developed a new gunpowder formula which laid the groundwork for the modern pellet powder. By 1860, he had begun to develop powder to fit the caliber of the gun by devising a formula whereby gunpowder could be compressed into disks. These disks, referred to as perforated cake powder, were approximately one or two inches thick and pierced with holes. The perforated powder burned slower than ordinary cannon powder. Rodman's perforated cake powder also provided more thrust and a more uniform pressure along the gun's bore, thereby reducing the strain on the gun and increasing its firing distance. A plaque on the large cannon is inscribed as follows:

15-INCH RODMAN GUN  
UNVEILED  
MEMORIAL DAY  
1921  
ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL

General Rodman, a native of Indiana, graduated from West Point in 1841 and was commanding officer of the Watertown Arsenal in Massachusetts prior to assuming command of the Rock Island Arsenal in 1865.

The King graves also contain a wrought-iron enclosure. A plaque on the front is inscribed:

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Civil War Era National Cemeteries

Rock Island National Cemetery  
Rock Island County, Illinois

Section number 7 Page 6

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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)

IN MEMORY OF  
COLONEL DAVID M. KING  
COMMANDING OFFICER, R.I.A.  
1921-1932  
ERECTED BY  
EMPLOYEES  
ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL

Inside the enclosure are two markers inscribed as follows:

DAVID MATSON KING  
COLONEL ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT  
U. S. ARMY  
1869-1932

MARGUERITE F.  
WIFE  
COL. DAVID MATSON KING  
DIED FEB. 28, 1946

There is also a plaque located near the King grave. The inscription reads as follows:

ERECTED AT  
ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL  
IN MEMORY OF  
COLONEL DAVID M. KING  
BORN NOV. 5, 1869 DIED JAN. 27, 1932  
THIS TABLET ERECTED  
BY A  
GROUP OF OFFICERS AND MEN WHO  
WERE PRIVILEGED TO SERVE UNDER  
COLONEL KING  
IN THE UNITED STATES AND IN  
FRANCE DURING WORLD WAR I  
1917-1919

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Civil War Era National Cemeteries

Rock Island National Cemetery  
Rock Island County, Illinois

Section number 7 Page 7

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)**

The brick administration/maintenance building with a flat roof was constructed circa 1971. A brick addition for vehicular storage, with a gable roof, was completed in 1987.

The committal service shelter with wood columns and a copper roof was constructed in 1987. The structure, surrounded by a stone wall, is used for interment services and special ceremonies.

A wood and brick rostrum with a tin roof was constructed in 1875 and located in the northeast corner of the grounds. This structure was removed sometime after 1950.

There are two monuments, each made of an original cast-iron seacoast artillery tube and secured by a concrete base. One is located in Section SE and one in Section SW. Each base contains four sets of five cannonballs at the corners.

The numbers shown for contributing resources within the property reflect the following:

**Buildings:** None

**Sites:** Cemetery

**Structures:** Gate, historic arch

**Objects:** Rodman grave, King grave, artillery monuments (2), plaques along walkway (9)

The numbers shown for non-contributing resources within the property reflect the following:

**Buildings:** Administration/service building and addition

**Structures:** Committal service shelter

**Objects:** Flagpole

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Civil War Era National Cemeteries

Rock Island National Cemetery  
Rock Island County, Illinois

Section number 8 Page 8

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Rock Island National Cemetery is significant under Criterion A and is an important component of the multiple property submission of Civil War Era National Cemeteries. It is significant under Criterion A because of its association with the Civil War. The cemetery also meets Criterion Consideration D, because it has been designated by Congress as a primary memorial to the military history of the United States.

The cemetery is significant beyond the Civil War era, as it includes the remains of veterans associated with every war and branch of service who have served their country throughout its history.

The period of significance ends in 1932, the year that Colonel David Matson King was buried in the cemetery.

The Rock Island National Cemetery is located within Arsenal Island, a military installation owned and operated by the United States Army. The entire arsenal island is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. A small portion of the Rock Island Arsenal was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1988, and includes the Thomas J. Rodman designed or influenced stone structures and the north central shore of the island that, under General Rodman's plan, was set aside as a staff residential area.

The first presence of the federal government on the island of Rock Island was in the early 1800's. The War Department had instructed the army to build a number of military posts on the upper Mississippi River to deter British and other foreign trading outfits from operating in the river valley. Rock Island was selected as a site for one of the forts, Fort Armstrong. Construction began in 1816. Fort Armstrong became the headquarters for military operations during what would be known as the Black Hawk War. This war officially ended in 1832. The army abandoned the fort in 1836, but the government retained Rock Island as a government reservation. In 1840, an ordnance depot was established at the old post and remained until 1845, when its stores were transferred to St. Louis. In 1856, the last of several fires destroyed the abandoned post. After the depot had closed in 1845, up until 1863, the Federal Government had placed civilian agents or custodians in charge of Rock Island. On July 11, 1862, the United States Congress passed an act that established an arsenal on the island of Rock Island.

In the following year, the U. S. Army Ordnance Department started construction of a storehouse on the western tip of the island. This storehouse, known today as the Clock Tower Building, was the first permanent arsenal building erected. During the Civil War, the Union Army's Ordnance Department had company on the island. Two separate army units operated on Rock Island during the last two

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Civil War Era National Cemeteries

Rock Island National Cemetery  
Rock Island County, Illinois

Section number 8 Page 9

**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)**

years of the Civil War. In 1863, the Army Quartermaster Department began to build a prisoner of war camp on the north central section of Rock Island. Union Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs ordered that a prison barracks large enough to accommodate 10,000 prisoners of war be built. In late August 1863, construction began near the north central shore of the island. The Rock Island Prison Barracks received its first Confederate prisoners of war (468) on December 3, 1863. They had been captured in the Battle of Lookout Mountain in southeastern Tennessee. Within a few weeks, the prison population rose from 468 to over 5,000 and eventually grew to 8,594. The Confederate prisoners were guarded by troops of the 4th Regiment of the Veterans Reserve Corps; the 37th Iowa Regiment; various "100 day" volunteer regiments; and the 108th U. S. Colored Infantry Regiment. The 4th Invalid Corps Regiment was a veteran reserve organization composed of wounded soldiers who were no longer fit for regular military service. Under the command of Colonel Richard H. Rush, the 4th Invalid Corps were the guards at Rock Island prison when the camp received its first Confederate prisoners in December 1863. Shortly thereafter, Colonel Johnson arrived at Rock Island and assumed command of the prison barracks in January 1864, and the 37th Iowa Volunteers Regiment arrived to supplement the guard force. This regiment, known as the "gray beard" regiment, was comprised of men too old for conscription. George Washington Kincaid, an Iowa pioneer settler and member of the state's first constitutional convention, sought first federal, then state, permission to form a unique regiment of men too old to enlist in the Regular Army. Iowa Governor Samuel J. Kirkwood granted his approval and appointed Mr. Kincaid the commanding officer of the 37th Iowa Volunteers. The regiment of "gray beards" was exclusively composed of men 45 years of age or older. The regiment contained 428 men over the age of 50; 145 of which were in their 60's, and one man who was 80. The regiment of "gray beards" was to be used exclusively as garrison and guard troops. They had earned praise for their provost and garrison duty in St. Louis, Missouri, and Alton, Illinois, but none was received at Rock Island. Inspectors of the barracks reported that the men were decrepit, old, and the most unpromising subjects for soldiers.

On September 24, 1864, the U. S. 108th Colored Infantry Regiment, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John Bishop, arrived by train to assume guard duty at the Rock Island Prison Barracks. The regiment's recruits, primarily from the slave population of north and west central Kentucky, enlisted for a three-year term of service. The 108th remained at Rock Island until May 1865.

After the camp opened in December 1863, the death toll from disease increased steadily. Union guards also died of disease or exposure to the elements while serving guard duty. A Confederate cemetery had been established adjacent to the prison compound and was relocated to its present site in February 1864. The bodies of dead Union soldiers not claimed by their families were reinterred in the current Rock Island National Cemetery.

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Rock Island National Cemetery  
Rock Island County, Illinois

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**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)**

In 1865, the U. S. Army Ordnance Department decided to build a manufacturing arsenal at Rock Island and selected Brevet Brigadier General Thomas J. Rodman to command the arsenal. He welcomed the opportunity to build a well-designed national arsenal at Rock Island. Construction of the first manufacturing shop buildings began in 1866 and continued until the last stone shop was completed in 1893.

The Rock Island National Cemetery was established in 1863 within the area currently occupied by the arsenal to provide burial space for those members of the Union army who died while serving as guards at the prison camp.

In 1868, five years after the establishment of the national cemetery, Brevet Major General Lorenzo Thomas, inspector of national cemeteries, wrote in his report that there were 136 interments in the cemetery, and that the burial area would ultimately interfere with the extension of the arsenal buildings according to the plan adopted at the suggestion of the commanding officer, General Thomas Rodman. Thomas recommended that the bodies be moved to the north end of the island. He also recommended that the remains of 159 soldiers (157 known and 2 unknown) buried in the back part of Oakdale Cemetery, three miles northeast of Davenport, Iowa, who died in the hospital in the city of Davenport, should be removed to the island. General Rodman concurred. The cemetery was then moved to a 1.2-acre site on the high ground at the southwestern segment of the island.

Records show that when the cemetery was moved to its present location, it contained 1.2 acres. Additional land was acquired in 1926 from the Arsenal (0.6 acre). A survey dated November 1934, a copy of which is included with this nomination, shows that the total area was 1.8 acres. In 1936, an additional parcel of 5.2 acres was acquired. These burial areas are located on the south side of the cemetery. Later that year, 1.9 acres were declared surplus and returned to the Rock Island Arsenal. Public Law 682, 81st Congress, approved August 10, 1950, transferred 22.3 acres from the Rock Island Arsenal for expansion of the cemetery. This parcel is located along the north boundary on Rodman Avenue where the main entrance is located and forms the central core of the cemetery. Transfer of an additional 16.8 acres from the Department of the Army to the Veterans Administration was authorized by Public Law 100-180 dated December 4, 1987. Land transfer took place in 1990. This transfer included a 3.6 acre parcel containing the Rock Island Post Cemetery, the Rodman and King gravesites, and the three Rodman-designed gun tubes, as well as a 13.2-acre parcel on the west boundary of the cemetery. No additional burials have been made in the post cemetery.

Thirty-three group burials for one hundred and fifty-four decedents have been made in the Rock Island National Cemetery. Circumstances of death of these servicemen precluded identification of their

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Civil War Era National Cemeteries

Rock Island National Cemetery  
Rock Island County, Illinois

Section number 8 Page 11

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

remains for individual burials, and they now rest in common graves with their comrades in arms who perished with them. Specially designed government headstones and markers bearing the name, rank, and date of death of the decedents in each group mark these honored gravesites. The group burial sites are located in Sections D and E of the cemetery. The largest group burial site, located in Section E, marks the honored resting place of nineteen servicemen who died on January 10, 1945, following an explosion on the U. S. S. *Warhawk*, a troop-landing carrier at anchor in the Lingayen Gulf of Luzon, largest of the Philippine Islands. This group burial was made in the national cemetery on June 23, 1950.

In a separate section of the national cemetery are 50 graves of the men of the U. S. 108th Colored Infantry Regiment who died while serving at the Rock Island Prison Barracks. Also buried in this section are the 16 southern "galvanized yankees" who died prior to being assigned to the western frontier.

Waldo W. Goetsch, the superintendent of Rock Island National Cemetery from 1947 to 1959 is buried in Section G, Grave 116. A plaque on the rear of his headstone reads as follows:

IM MEMORY  
OF  
WALDO W. GOETSCH  
SUPERINTENDENT  
ROCK ISLAND NATIONAL  
CEMETERY  
1947 - 1959  
ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL  
EMPLOYEES  
JUN 13, 1895  
JUN 17, 1959

Also interred in the cemetery are 159 Civil War decedents whose remains were transferred from the Oakdale Cemetery in Davenport, Iowa.

There are two Medal of Honor recipients are buried in the cemetery:

**Frank Peter Witek, Private First Class, U. S. Marine Corps Reserve** - He was awarded the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of

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Civil War Era National Cemeteries

Rock Island National Cemetery  
Rock Island County, Illinois

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NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

duty while serving with the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, 3d Marine Division, during the Battle of Finegayen at Guam, Marinas, on August 3, 1944. When his rifle platoon was halted by heavy surprise fire from well-camouflaged enemy positions, Pfc. Witek daringly remained standing to fire a full magazine from his automatic at point-blank range into a depression housing Japanese troops, killing eight of the enemy and enabling the greater part of his platoon to take cover. During his platoon's withdrawal for consolidation of lines, he remained to safeguard a severely wounded comrade, courageously returning the enemy's fire until the arrival of stretcher bearers, and then covering the evacuation by sustained fire as he moved backward toward his own lines. With his platoon again pinned down by a hostile machine gun, Pfc. Witek, on his own initiative, moved forward boldly to the reinforcing tanks and infantry, alternately throwing hand grenades and firing as he advanced to within five to ten yards of the enemy position, and destroying the hostile machine gun emplacement and an additional eight Japanese before he himself was struck down by an enemy rifleman. His valiant and inspiring action effectively reduced the enemy's firepower, thereby enabling his platoon to attain its objective, and reflects the highest credit upon Pfc. Witek and the U. S. Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country. He is buried in Section E, Grave 72.

**Edward J. Moskala, Private First Class, U. S. Army, Company C, 383d Infantry, 96th Infantry Division.** At Kakazu Ridge, Okinawa, Ryukyu Islands, on April 9, 1945, he was the leading element when grenade explosions and concentrated machine gun and mortar fire halted the unit's attack on Kakazu Ridge, Okinawa, Ryukyu Islands. With utter disregard for his personal safety, he charged 40 yards through withering, grazing fire and wiped out two machine gun nests with well-aimed grenades and deadly accurate fire from his automatic rifle. When strong counterattacks and fierce enemy resistance from other positions forced his company to withdraw, he voluntarily remained behind with eight others to cover the maneuver. Fighting from a critically dangerous position for three hours, he killed more than 25 Japanese before following his surviving companions through screening smoke down the face of the ridge to a gorge where he discovered that one of the group had been left behind, wounded. Unhesitatingly, Pvt. Moskala climbed the bullet-swept slope to assist in the rescue, and, returning to lower ground, volunteered to protect other wounded while the bulk of the troops quickly took up more favorable positions. He had saved another casualty and killed four enemy infiltrators when he was struck and mortally wounded himself while aiding still another disabled soldier. With gallant initiative, unfaltering courage, and heroic determination to destroy the enemy, Pvt. Moskala gave his life in his complete devotion to his company's mission and his comrades' well-being. His intrepid conduct provided a lasting inspiration for those whom he served. He is buried in Section E, Grave 293.



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**MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

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Historical Records, Rock Island National Cemetery

Historical Records, Rock Island Arsenal Museum

Department of Veterans Affairs Historic Preservation Office

Report of the Inspector of the National Cemeteries of the United States for 1869

Report of the Inspector of the National Cemeteries for the years 1870 and 1871

Slattery, Thomas J. An Illustrated History of the Rock Island Arsenal and Arsenal Island, Parts 1 and 2, Historical Office, U. S. Army Armament, Munitions and Chemical Command, Rock Island, Illinois, 1990.

Holt, Dean W. American Military Cemeteries. North Carolina: McFarland and Company, Inc., 1992.

**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA - UTM REFERENCES**

POINT	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	15	706900	4598420
B	15	706700	4598330
C	15	706700	4598250
D	15	706330	4598300
E	15	706300	4598630
F	15	706500	4598640
G	15	706510	4598760

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**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA - VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The boundaries are indicated on the accompanying base map.

**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA - BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The National Cemetery System has used the existing boundaries of the cemetery.

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ROCK ISLAND NATIONAL CEMETERY

Rock Island County, Illinois

Therese T. Sammartino, photographer

Date of Photographs: August 15 and 16, 1996

All negatives are stored with Technical Support Service (401B), National Cemetery System, Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20420

VIEW OF: Main entrance, view looking south

NEG. NO. 6482-20

PHOTO 1 of 18

VIEW OF: Additional cannon near Rodman  
grave

NEG. NO. 6482-10

PHOTO 7 of 18

VIEW OF: Flagpole, view looking north

NEG. NO. 6482-2

PHOTO 2 of 18

VIEW OF: King grave

NEG. NO. 6482-7

PHOTO 8 of 18

VIEW OF: Historic gate

NEG. NO. 6482-3

PHOTO 3 of 18

VIEW OF: Plaque near King grave

NEG. NO. 6482-8

PHOTO 9 of 18

VIEW OF: Historic walkway

NEG. NO. 6482-4

PHOTO 4 of 18

VIEW OF: Cemetery, view looking west  
showing artillery monuments

NEG. NO. 6482-11

PHOTO 10 of 18

VIEW OF: Rodman grave

NEG. NO. 6482-5

PHOTO 5 of 18

VIEW OF: Administration/maintenance  
building, east elevation

NEG. NO. 6482-15

PHOTO 11 of 18

VIEW OF: Cannon near Rodman grave

NEG. NO. 6482-9

PHOTO 6 of 18

VIEW OF: Administration/maintenance  
building, north elevation

NEG. NO. 6482-16

PHOTO 12 of 18

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet**

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**Rock Island National Cemetery  
Rock Island County, Illinois**

Section number PHOTO Page 16

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VIEW OF: Administration/maintenance  
building, northwest elevation  
NEG. NO. 6482-17  
PHOTO 13 of 18

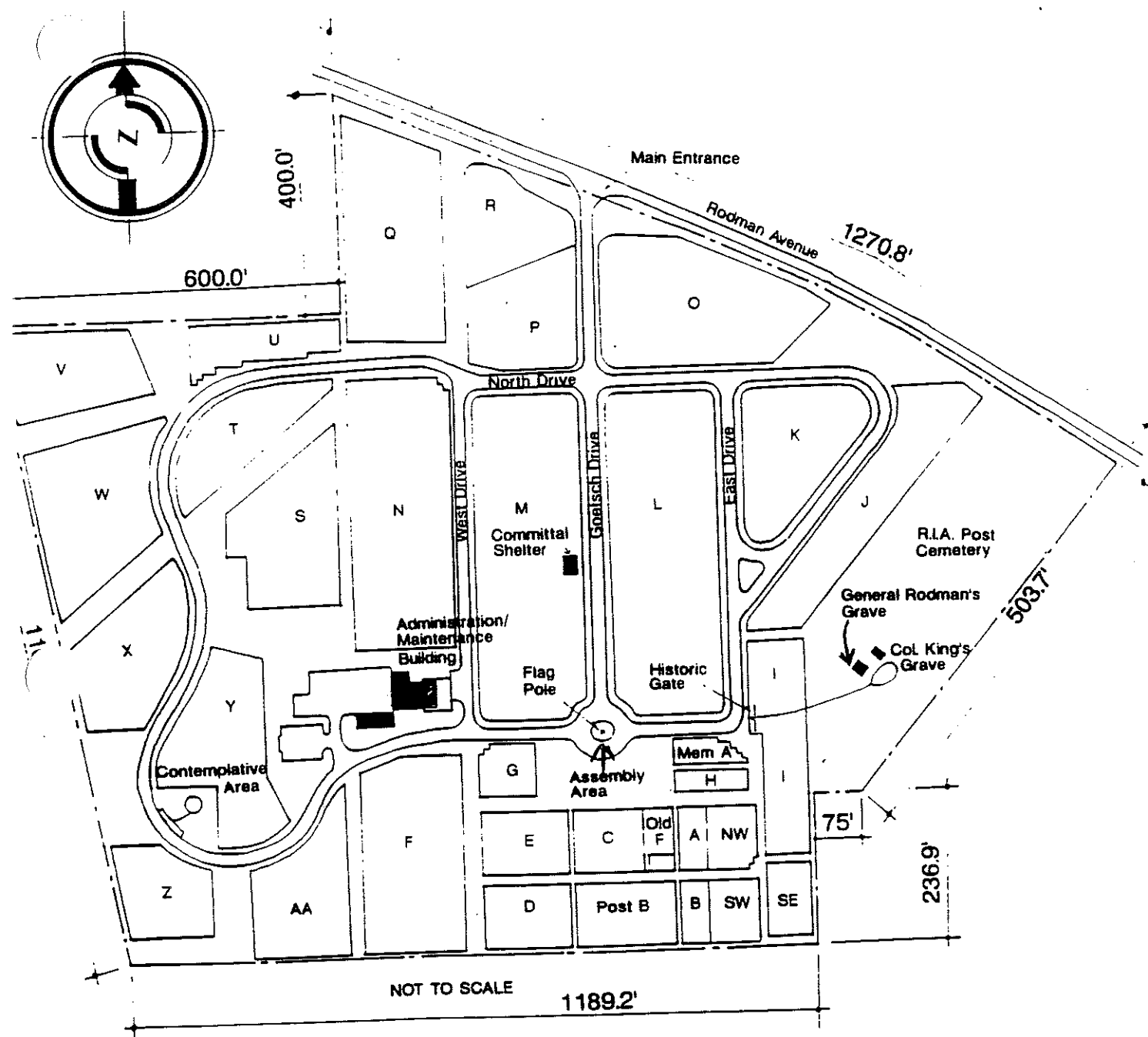
VIEW OF: Committal service shelter  
NEG. NO. 6482-13  
PHOTO 16 of 18

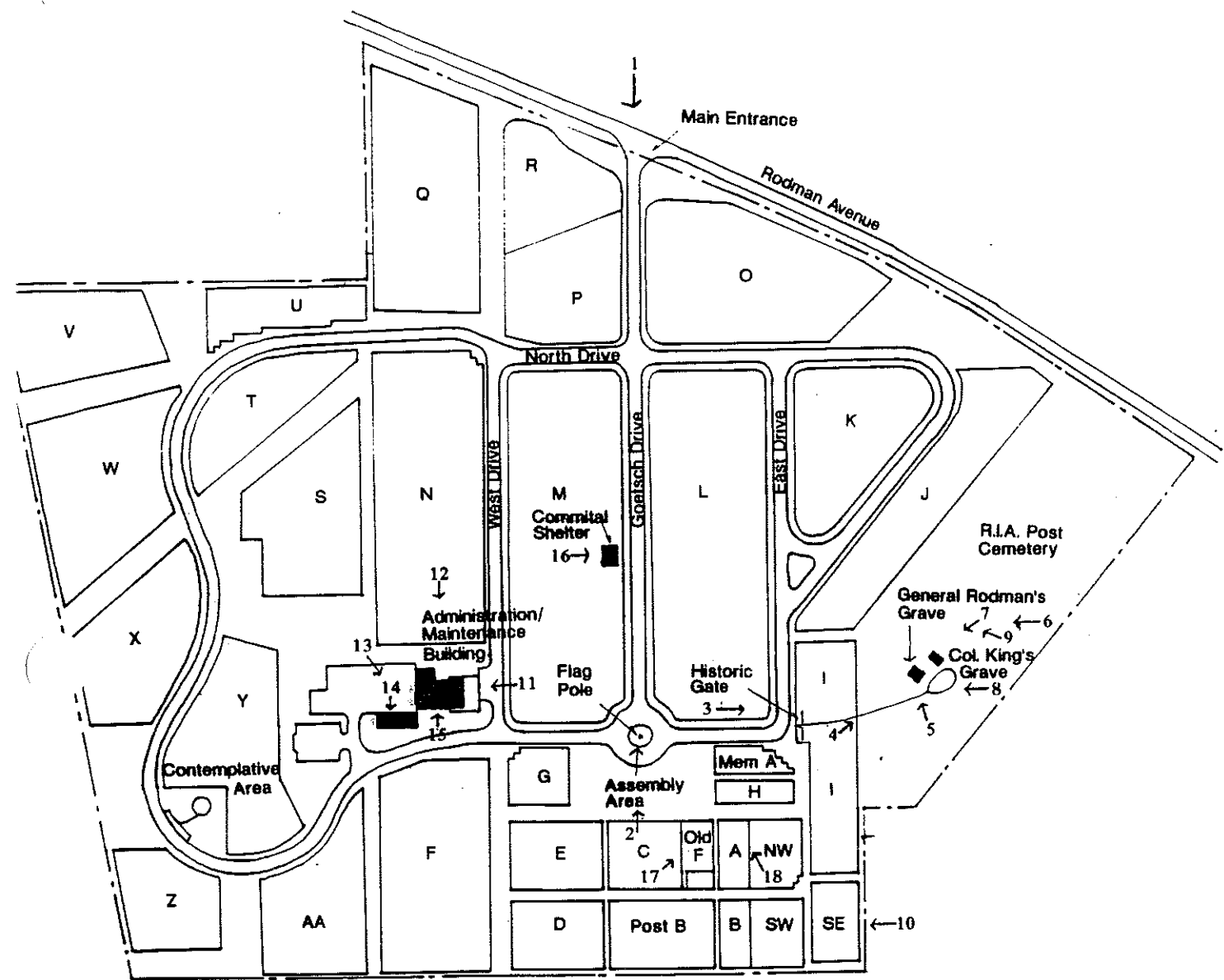
VIEW OF: Administration/maintenance  
building, north elevation  
NEG. NO. 6482-18  
PHOTO 14 of 18

VIEW OF: Cemetery, view looking northeast  
NEG. NO. 6751-13  
PHOTO 17 of 18

VIEW OF: Administration/maintenance  
building, south elevation  
NEG. NO. 6482-19  
PHOTO 15 of 18

VIEW OF: Cemetery, view looking northwest  
NEG. NO. 6842-12  
PHOTO 18 of 18





NOT TO SCALE

Sketch Map  
Rock Island National Cemetery  
Rock Island County, Illinois

Note: Numbered arrows correspond  
to the views in the accompanying  
photographs



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

IOWA

ROAD CLASSIFICATION	
Primary highway, hard surface.....	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface.....
Secondary highway, hard surface.....	Unimproved road.....

Interstate Route      U. S. Route      State Route

ROCK ISLAND NATL. CEMETERY

ZONE 15  
DAVENPORT EAST, IOWA-ILL.  
41090-E5-1F-024

ROCK                      AND                      1991                      IOWA

DMA 7867 II SE-SERIES V876